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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
09/801,170	03/08/2001	Katsuhisa Fukuda	10721-8US	8631

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EXAMINER

PATEL, JAGDISH

ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
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3624

DATE MAILED: 04/28/2005

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

09/801,170

Applicant(s)

FUKUDA ET AL.

Examiner

Thu Thao Havan

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-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --
Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 08 March 2001.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-9 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-9 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☒ The drawing(s) filed on 18 June 2001 is/are: a) ☒ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
- ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 - ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 - ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
- * See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- 1) ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3) ☒ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date 3/8/01.
- 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____.
- 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- 6) ☐ Other: _____.

Detailed Action

Drawings

The drawings filed on June 18, 2001 are accepted by the Examiner.

Information Disclosure Statement

The information disclosure statements (IDS) submitted on March 8, 2001 are filed in compliance with the provisions of 37 CFR 1.97. Accordingly, the information disclosure statements were considered by the examiner.

Specification

Applicant is reminded of the proper language and format for an abstract of the disclosure.

The abstract should be in narrative form and generally limited to a single paragraph on a separate sheet within the range of 50 to 150 words. It is important that the abstract not exceed 150 words in length since the space provided for the abstract on the computer tape used by the printer is limited. The form and legal phraseology often used in patent claims, such as "means" and "said," should be avoided. The abstract should describe the disclosure sufficiently to assist readers in deciding whether there is a need for consulting the full patent text for details.

The language should be clear and concise and should not repeat information given in the title. It should avoid using phrases which can be implied, such as, "The disclosure concerns," "The disclosure defined by this invention," "The disclosure describes," etc. Furthermore, multiple paragraphs are not permitted in the abstract. In addition, the paragraph of an abstract should not be a claim.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

Claims 1-9 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Colyer et al. (US patent no. 6,745,196) in view of Scharber et al. (US patent no. 6,374,290).

Re claim 1, Colyer teaches a method for registering members of a group with a server that is configured to supply a service to a group via a communications network (col. 6, lines 3-53), comprising:

provisionally registering a group profile (col. 6, line 54 to col. 7, line 32),

issuing a group ID that is available for use upon provisional registration of the group profile (col. 10, lines 20-50; col. 7, lines 49-63; fig. 5); *In other words, Colyer discloses a user login corresponds to a group ID since he discloses each community is a group of two or more people who are connected as a user to represent a company;*

allowing a group representative to perform preliminary processing for accessing the service (col. 10, lines 51-60),

reflecting the preliminary processing in the service, maintain availability of the service, and providing the service (col. 2, line 63 to col. 3, line 19); *Correspondingly, Colyer discloses users from the community (e.g., further employees of the business) are invited onto the service and registered on the database. Once a service is maintained than that service*

is approved. For example, Coyer discloses a vacation request or purchase order approval request; and

performing ID authentication to authenticate and control requests for service from at least one of the group representative and a member of the group (col. 10, lines 51-67). In the same way to the claimed limitation, Coyer discloses ID authentication by disclosing confirming a password to authenticate a user.

However, Coyer does not explicitly teach assessing credit worthiness of the group using information provided in the group profile. Nevertheless, Coyer generally teaches assessing credit worthiness when he discloses ranking of a register user in determining a unique key combination of the user's roles in a transaction (col. 10, lines 2-15). On the other hand, Scharber teaches rating the community group based on using information provided in the group profile that broadly specify assessing credit worthiness of the group (col. 3, lines 13-20 and 37-41; col. 4, lines 1-9 and 24-63). In other words, Scharber teaches rating group profile based on the collective users' profile and preferences. The rating of Scharber corresponds to the claimed limitation of assessing credit worthiness. In that, Scharber is assessing credit worthiness of the group by rating the group profile. The group file provides preferences of all users. Thus, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of applicant's invention to modify a group profile for providing credit worthiness of a group because it provides a mean of rating the group according to the provided preferences and profile.

Re claim 2, Colyer teaches preliminary processing comprises registering a plurality of group member profiles (col. 2, lines 15-32 and lines 63-67). *In other words, Colyer discloses community of users initially registers to represent as a company.*

Re claim 3, Colyer teaches preliminary processing comprises customizing to allow selection of more than one of a plurality of services (col. 3, lines 20-41). *Colyer discloses customizing by users creating their area of services.*

Re claim 4, Colyer teaches generating a contract based on the group profile after provisionally registering the group profile and providing the contract to the group (col. 12, lines 23-55). *Correspondingly, Colyer discloses a previously registered user invites a new user based on the profile provided by the new user. Furthermore, a contract is disclosed in Colyer as an agreement for a service that bond the users to a particular service (col. 12, lines 39-43).*

Re claims 5 and 8, Colyer teaches registering at least one profile of at least one group member comprises at least one of individually and collectively registering, at least one of on line and off line, a user profile (col. 13, lines 1-50). *Colyer discloses registering users according to user's identification (i.e. profile) whether registering online or manually register by a manager (i.e. registering off line).*

Re claim 6, Colyer teaches a method for registering members of a group with a server that is configured to supply a service to a group via a communications network (col. 6, lines 3-53), comprising:

sending group credit information from a communication terminal to the server via the network (col. 6, lines 20-33),

issuing to the group a group ID for use in applying for the service supplied by the server (col. 10, lines 20-50); *Colyer teaches user login which corresponds to group ID as claimed;*

enabling group members to use the group ID to apply for the service (col. 2, line 63 to col. 3, line 19; col. 11, lines 1-20); *Correspondingly, Colyer discloses users from the community (e.g., further employees of the business) are invited onto the service and registered on the database. Once a service is maintained than that service is approved. For example, Coyler discloses a vacation request or purchase order approval request), and*

registering information on the group received by the server from the communication terminal (col. 10, lines 35-60).

However, Colyer does not explicitly teach evaluating group credit worthiness. Nevertheless, Colyer generally teaches evaluating group credit worthiness when he discloses ranking of a register user in determining a unique key combination of the user's roles in a transaction (col. 10, lines 2-15). On the other hand, Scharber teaches rating the community group based on using information provided in the group profile that broadly specify assessing credit worthiness of the group (col. 3, lines 13-20 and 37-41; col. 4, lines 1-9 and 24-63). In other words, Scharber teaches rating group profile based on the collective users' profile and preferences. The rating of Scharber corresponds to the claimed limitation of assessing credit worthiness. In that, Scharber is assessing credit worthiness of the group by rating the group profile. The group file provides preferences of all users. Thus, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of

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applicant's invention to modify a group profile for providing credit worthiness of a group because it provides a mean of rating the group according to the provided preferences and profile.

Re claim 7, Colyer teaches registering at least one profile of at least one group member in response to an application by at least one group member to use the service (col. 14, lines 5-36). *Colyer discloses registering in response to an application by the application list includes all tasks, which have been initiated by the then-current user.*

Re claim 9, Colyer teaches a method for registering a group with a server that is configured to supply a service to a group via a communications network (col. 6, lines 3-53), comprising:

providing the server with information on the group via a communication terminal (col. 6, lines 20-33),

issuing an ID to the group, the ID enabling use of the service by the group (col. 10, lines 20-50),

informing the group of the ID (col. 11, lines 1-20),

registering the ID with the server (col. 10, lines 35-60), and

deleting the ID from the server when the assessment of credit worthiness of the group is negative (col. 14, lines 5-36). *In other words, Colyer discloses a master list wherein the user id is ranked and checked and if the user id is not in the master list or the temporary list then the user id is cleared from the list. The step of clearing the user id corresponds to deleting the ID from the server.*

However, Colyer does not explicitly teach assessing credit worthiness of the group using information provided in the group profile. Nevertheless, Colyer generally teaches assessing credit worthiness when he discloses ranking of a register user in determining a unique key combination of the user's roles in a transaction (col. 10, lines 2-15). On the other hand, Scharber teaches rating the community group based on using information provided in the group profile that broadly specify assessing credit worthiness of the group (col. 3, lines 13-20 and 37-41; col. 4, lines 1-9 and 24-63). In other words, Scharber teaches rating group profile based on the collective users' profile and preferences. The rating of Scharber corresponds to the claimed limitation of assessing credit worthiness. In that, Scharber is assessing credit worthiness of the group by rating the group profile. The group file provides preferences of all users. Thus, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of applicant's invention to modify a group profile for providing credit worthiness of a group because it provides a mean of rating the group according to the provided preferences and profile.

Conclusion

The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure.

Desai et al, US patent no. 6,820,204, discloses exchange system for sharing user profile information;

Kakuta et al, US patent no. 6,714,965, discloses group contacting system permitting users to interact with another group;

Putta et al, US publication no. 2001/0032192, discloses customer's online login and password;

Flickinger et al, US publication no. 2001/0025245, discloses e-registrar in relation to credit card company;

Sandgren et al., US patent no. 6,442,693, teaches online communications between registered participants; and

Reddy, US publication no. 2002/0087506, shows computer network permitting an entrepreneur to interactively access information online.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Thu Thao Havan whose telephone number is (571) 272-8111. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday-Friday.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Vincent Millin can be reached on (571) 272-6747. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is (703) 872-9306.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct-uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at (866) 217-9197 (toll-free).

TTH
4/20/05



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